STATE OF MICHIGAN

Sen. Gilbert's and Rep. Acciavatti's
spill-protection measures pass Senate

LANSING – A person responsible for spilling harmful materials into surface or groundwater will be required to immediately report the spill to local authorities under legislation passed Wednesday in the Senate.

Senate Bill 977, sponsored by Sen. Jud Gilbert, and House Bill 5586, sponsored by Rep. Dan Acciavatti, mandate that local 911 dispatchers be the first party notified in the event of a chemical spill. Dispatchers will then follow a plan developed by the county emergency management coordinator to get the information to water plants and other local agencies in a prompt manner.

"I'm pleased my colleagues understand how important it is for local authorities and residents to be notified quickly," said Gilbert, R-Algonac. "Immediately calling 911 allows the proper officials to get the information they need to make crucial decisions on closing water intakes and notifying residents more quickly and effectively."

Gilbert also commended Acciavatti for his hard work on this issue. The two legislators have worked closely constructing the best legislation to efficiently deal with the chemical spills, which impact both of their districts.

"This is extremely important legislation for the residents of Macomb and St. Clair counties," said Acciavatti, R- Chesterfield Township. "I am eager for the legislation from the House and Senate to get to the governor's desk to help safeguard our communities in the event of a future spill."

The legislation also requires the responsible party to submit a full written explanation to the DEQ and local health departments affected by the spill. This report will contain information such as the cause of the spill, what types of materials were released, quantities, response measures taken, and what steps are being taken to prevent another spill.

SB 977 now goes to the House for consideration along with HB 5586.

###